

## **CAMERAGAL MONTESSORI SCHOOL**

Cameragal Montessori School provides a preschool program for boys and girls from three to six years of age. It aims to provide an authentic Montessori environment and is staffed by fully qualified and experienced Montessori directresses and assistants.

The school was started in 1976 by a group of enthusiastic parents and has expanded to three classes at two locations. Cameragal was the name of an Aboriginal tribe, which lived on the North Shore.

## **MARIA MONTESSORI**

Dr Maria Montessori (1870-1952) began her work in education at the turn of the century and went on to dedicate her life to the cause of the child.

She believed that education begins at birth and that the first six years of life, being the most formative, are the more important both physically and mentally. It is during this time that a child's powers of absorption are highest and attitudes and patterns of learning that will last for life are formed. Dr Montessori went on to expand her ideas into a fully articulated education program.

## **MONTESSORI APPROACH**

Dr Montessori believed that children have an innate positive attitude towards learning. In a Montessori classroom there is a special atmosphere of cheerful orderliness, calmness and purposeful work. The Montessori approach is child-centred but adult-guided. It is structured but free for learning and emphasises basics in an enjoyable way. Respect for the child is paramount. The Montessori method aims to develop each child's:

- concentration
- co-ordination
- persistence in completing a task
- self discipline
- sense of order
- desire to learn
- independence
- initiative
- creative self expression

The Montessori environment provides the young child with specifically designed activities and materials appropriate for growth and development. To this end, the classroom is made up of:

- practical life or daily living exercises which assist the control of movement, development of order, independence and social grace;
- sensorial activities which assist the child to understand the sensorial dimension of the world and to develop the child's perceptual abilities in the discrimination of size, colour, shape, sound, touch, taste and smell.
- language activities which prepare the development of precise speech, writing and reading;

- mathematical exercises and games which provide concrete experiences in quantities and symbols and the four mathematical operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, and;
- cultural studies, science, history and so on are offered as extensions of the language programme.

## **CAMERAGAL SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

Cameragal was established to provide an authentic Montessori program for 3-6 year olds following Dr Montessori (1870-1952) philosophies.

In the program for the 3-6 year old child, materials offered in the environment respond to the child's prevailing learning sensitivities - Dr Montessori developed the notion of "a right time to learn" - a time of heightened sensitivity when a child shows a strong spontaneous interest in certain aspects of the environment. Appropriate materials are offered at this time to make use of the particular sensitivity/ies.

The Montessori materials are a significant component of the prepared environment. They provide the opportunity for a child to work on tasks for extended periods of time and these experiences support the development of concentration.

An important feature of the materials is that they are mostly self-correcting. As the child manipulates the material he/she is able to gauge his/her performance because of the in-built "control-of-error". The way in which the children are encouraged to use the materials supports the development of orderly work habits and persistence at the task (problem solving). The other significant elements of the classroom are the other children and the adults.

Central to Dr Montessori's concept of education is the idea that the child develops by being active. Children will come to know about their world if given the freedom to engage their full attention to exploring and to discovery. In the classroom, therefore, freedom is the key to the child's spontaneous activity.

Children are given the freedom to choose what work they will do and for how long they will engage in that activity. A balance is maintained between the need of each individual to have sufficient freedom to grow and to develop towards independence and the necessity for order and harmony within the group.

The mixed age group with children of three, four and five years working in the same environment, is a major contributor to the learning outcomes. This further supports the growing child's social learning. The three-year age range is a feature of a Montessori school so that commitment to a three-year program is a fundamental principle.

The child's development occurs in six main areas.

- movement
- language
- development and refinement of the senses
- order
- acquisition of the social customs and behavior of the child's culture and society

- mathematics

Teachers in the Montessori environment are called Directresses or Directors. Their role is wider than that of just teacher - it is not exclusively or primarily as an imparter of knowledge but a director and facilitator of development. Dr Montessori believed that if children are given access to materials especially designed to support their development, they have the capacity to learn by their own actions. The task of the Directress/Director is to observe the children and then to link them to appropriate activities in the environment through simple short presentations

## **THE CAMERAGAL COMMUNITY**

Cameragal now serves approximately 88 families each year with three classes of approximately 29 students each. The school is a small community with a rich atmosphere that is enjoyable as well as serves educational and practical ends. A number of social events occur each year that allow parents and families to get to know one another outside of school hours. Some of these are:

- family picnics
- children's Christmas parties
- morning teas
- class dinners

## **THE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

Cameragal Montessori School provides a three-year program, which operates five days per week, three hours a day, with an additional, two and a half hours for the Extended Day program. Children approaching five will be invited to join the Extended Day program. On completion of the third year, children enter first grade in other school systems or continue on to Montessori Primary. Entering Cameragal Montessori School means a commitment to its three-year program.

## **CAMERAGAL SCHOOL AFTERNOON CARE**

Cameragal offers an Afternoon Care Program for a small group of children at Forsyth Park (Monday to Thursday) and at Lavender Bay (Tuesday to Thursday). The program is conducted alongside the Extended Day program for 5-6 years olds in the prepared environment of the children's house.

Children need to be eligible to join the Afternoon Care group. Priority is given to older children, (four years and up) as they approach Extended Day. If you would like your child to attend Afternoon Care, speak to your child's directress. She will be able to let you know when your child is ready and will give you further information on the routines of lunch, the schedule for the afternoon, etc. for each site.

The fee per day is in the attached fee structure. When your child is placed on a term roster for the Afternoon Care, you will be billed for that term, even if your child is absent due to illness or another reason.

## **CLASSES - LOCATIONS AND HOURS**

The Cameragal Montessori School consists of three preschool classes at two locations. Classes are held Monday to Friday 9.00am to 12 noon (Extended Day 9.00am to 2.45pm).

Mimis & Pademelons  
Classrooms:

Forsyth Park Community Centre  
2B Montpelier St  
Neutral Bay

Tel: 02 9929 4801

Tiddalicks Classroom:

Cnr Lavender & Walker Streets  
North Sydney (Lavender Bay)

Tel: 02 9929 0144

School postal address:  
Cameragal Montessori School  
P O Box 1742, North Sydney NSW 2059

Please address all correspondence to the PO Box or email  
[admin@cameragal.nsw.edu.au](mailto:admin@cameragal.nsw.edu.au).

## **PARENT EDUCATION**

Parent education evenings are held each term for all interested parents. It is advisable to learn about the Montessori approach and Cameragal Montessori School by attending these evenings both before your child starts and while your child is attending the school.

Every parent with children at the school is invited to a classroom observation each year. These observations are arranged with the Directresses. Also, conferences are held twice each year and offer a great opportunity for parents to meet with their child's Directress and assess the child's development. In addition, each Directress is available for telephone conferences each day and parents are invited to contact them as desired.

A New Parents Evening is held once a year for parents whose children may be starting at the school in the following year.

An Open Day is held annually for parents and interested members of the public.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Choosing Montessori preschooling is a strong commitment to your child's development and education. This commitment is in two related areas:

- support for the Montessori principles and philosophy in the upbringing of children, which establishes a flow through between home and school.
- commitment to the School and its maintenance. Cameragal Montessori School is a non-profit, parent-run school, operating to keep fees to a minimum while

ensuring a high standard of education. Parents must be involved and contribute to the school in areas such as:

- committee membership
- school maintenance
- running and operations of the school
- events coordination
- newsletter administration

Parents are responsible for the administration of the school. This is done through a School Board, which is elected annually.

For enquiries regarding enrolment and for arrangements to observe at the school, please contact the Registrar on 9954 0344.

## **ENROLMENT AND ADMISSION**

In order to enrol their children, parents must become Members of the Cameragal Montessori School and maintain yearly Membership while their children are on the waiting list or attending the school. All Members receive the regular Newsletter, have access to the Parent Library and may attend the Parent Education evenings.

To secure a place on the waiting list for enrolment an Enrolment Form may be completed online or an application form should be returned with the appropriate fees to the Registrar. Please see the attached fee schedule for costs.

The waiting list is often long and the selection criteria include the order of enrolment, sibling rights, age/sex balance of the class and parent commitment to the school's philosophy. Please also note that as vacancies are limited in most years, Cameragal is obliged to give first consideration to the residents and workers in the North Sydney Local Government Area.

The Registrar will contact parents in the year preceding their child turning three years of age to advise acceptance to the school, by letter of offer. **Observation of the classroom by a parent attending is strongly recommended before a decision is reached for the child to commence at the school.** Arrangements should be made by contacting the Registrar at the School Office.

One general waiting list is maintained for all three classes. As places become available offers are made. Preferences as to class are noted but cannot be guaranteed.

## **FINANCIAL COMMITMENT**

School fees are paid each term in advance. The school year has four terms. If the child starts later in the weeks after his/her first term begins, then pro rata fees will be charged. There is a discount per term for siblings attending the school concurrently\*.

A bond is paid prior to each child's commencement. The bond is retained whilst the child is attending the school. It is held to protect the school against financial loss and classroom planning disruption should a child be withdrawn early from the school. The

bond is only returned when a child has completed the full three-year program. No interest is paid on the bond. At present the Preschool fees consist of:

- Term fees\*. There is a late payment penalty \*, which is applied if fees are not received by the second Friday of term.
- The bond is a once off amount \*. A small amount is non-refundable and is paid into The Cameragal Fund \*, a benevolent fund that has been established by the School to assist parents who find themselves in financial difficulty with their fees.
- \* Please see the attached fee structure for the amounts

As many parents have similar questions, we offer the following:

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:**

### **At what age do the children start in preschool?**

Children begin preschool at three years of age.

### **Do preschool children attend every day?**

Yes they do attend every day in order to fully participate in all facets of a wide and rounded school life. They need to do this to be community members rather than “visitors” and to achieve continuity in their work and that of the class and to have the greatest opportunity to experience the full range of experiences that Montessori class offers.

### **Why is there a three-year age range in each classroom?**

The older children act as role models for the younger children: they instruct younger children, reviewing concepts themselves in the process. Patience and confidence are reinforced and practiced.

The older children are able to work at their own level, if lower than their peers, without this becoming obvious to their peers. Younger children can also work at a level above that of their peers without it becoming obvious.

Younger children learn to seek the help and assistance of those more experienced than themselves. They begin to learn to seek the help themselves.

### **What is the importance of completing the three-year cycle?**

Within each 3-year cycle, a body of information and skills are presented. Failure to complete the 3-year cycle results in the child not achieving the “total possibility” offered by the class. Many loose ends, partially developed skills and incoherent knowledge are obvious.

Montessori recognised sensitive periods in the development of children’s lives when they show strong interest in certain aspects of their environment. She designed her progress to introduce aspects of learning at a time when the children are most receptive. The third year is the culmination of this process.

## **What is the importance of a child remaining in the Montessori system after the age of six?**

Much learned in any one class is as is always the case a preparation for the future work. Each class takes the raw materials from the one preceding it and brings them to “maturity”. For example geography, history and biology facts from a 3-6 class lead to abstract, imaginative exploration and concept formation in a 6-9 class. A six-year-old child has developed skills in reading, writing and mathematics. These find continual and smooth refinement and expansion in a 6-9 class.

A child remaining with the Montessori system after preschool continues education within the same environment, in which a teacher with the same educational philosophy operates. The 6-9 child can continue to use, without restriction, the skills and tools, he/she learnt in the previous three years.

## **What is the Montessori New Environment and a child’s learning process in it?**

In the Montessori classroom at any level the child is confronted with an orderly environment containing a variety of concrete activities, which in many cases, are self-correcting. The activities progress steadily from simple to complex, from concrete to abstract.

For more about the Montessori method, we recommend you read some of the following:

By Maria Montessori:	About Maria Montessori
The Secret of Childhood	Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work by E M Standing
The Discovery of the Child	Maria Montessori: Biography by Rita Kramer
A Child in the Family	

About the teaching method:

Montessori: A Modern Approach by Paula P Lillard

Montessori and Your Child, A Primer for Parents by Terry Malloy

A Parent’s Guide to the Montessori Classroom by Aline D. Wolf

# CAMERAGAL MONTESSORI SCHOOL

## 2013 Fees and Payments Schedule

Cameragal Montessori School is a parent-funded and parent-run school relying upon a combination of school fees and very active parent involvement to ensure that the School can continue to provide professional teaching staff and high quality materials and equipment.

The following table summaries the various categories of fees and payments and their current scheduled rates. Those categories and rates can be amended at any time by the School as changes in the School's circumstances require. The current fees and payments are comprised of recurring fees (the Term Fee, the Afternoon Care Fee and the Membership Fee), one-off payments (the Refundable Bond and the Enrolment Fee), optional fees (the Library Fund Donation, the Administrative Levy, Working Bee Levy and Building Fund Donation) and the late payment penalty. Unless otherwise indicated, fees and payments in the table below are not subject to GST.

### **Recurring Fees**

#### **Term Fee** (including Extended Day)

\$2,200 each term for four terms per year

Siblings attending concurrently

\$2,150 each term for four terms per year

#### **Afternoon Care Fee**

\$25 per day

12noon to 2.45pm for >4 years of age.

#### **Membership Fee**

\$55 per family per year (incl GST)

All families are required to be a paid up members of the School whilst they have a child on the waiting list and/or attending the School. Renewable on 1 February each year.

### **Optional Charges**

#### **Library Fund Donation**

\$50 per family per year (billed in Term 2)

This is a voluntary donation to the School's library fund, for which a receipt will be issued to allow donors to claim tax deductions.

#### **Administration Levy**

\$1650 per year (incl GST)

Parents who are unable to assist in the running of the School can opt to pay the Administration Levy.

### **Late Payment Penalty**

\$50 per month

Term Fees are due at the end of the first full week of each term. Late payment incurs a penalty. An additional late payment penalty will also be payable for each month that payment is late.

### **One-Off Payments**

#### **Refundable Bond**

\$2,200

The Bond is refunded in full, less \$50 donation to the Cameragal Fund, upon completion of full three year School program. The Bond is also refunded, less \$275 Administration Fee, if a child leaves during the introductory 4 week probationary period.

#### **Enrolment Fee**

\$110 per family for all children (incl GST)

#### **Working Bee Levy**

\$220 per year (incl GST)

Parents who are unable to take part in a Working Bee once per year can opt to pay the Working Bee Levy.

#### **Building Fund Donation**

\$100 per term

This is a voluntary donation to fund building works for the school buildings at Lavender Bay and Forsyth Park. A receipt will be issued to allow donors to claim tax deductions.

**Cameragal Montessori School (ACN 001 384 345)  
P O Box 1742, North Sydney, NSW 2059**

**APPLICATION TO BE ON THE WAITING LIST FOR ENROLMENT**

Application for the school year 20\_\_\_\_ (Note children start at 3 years of age)

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Boy/Girl: \_\_\_\_\_

Details of Parent/Guardian (1):

Details of Parent/Guardian (2):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Business phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Business phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Workplace location: \_\_\_\_\_

Workplace location: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address for contact: \_\_\_\_\_

We require the following information to prioritise the waiting list & form class plans:

Your local council: \_\_\_\_\_

Residency status in Australia: \_\_\_\_\_

Have any of your children attended a Montessori programme? Please provide details:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate if your child has any special development needs:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate which language is the main language spoken in the home:

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you selected a primary school for your child? Please provide details:

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Please indicate if you have a preference for one of our two campuses with a brief reason for the preference:

Forsyth Park: \_\_\_\_\_ Lavender Bay: \_\_\_\_\_

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To assist in our future marketing, please advise how you heard about Cameragal:

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### **MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Cameragal Montessori School is a public company limited by guarantee. The members, in the event of the Company being wound up having incurred debts and liabilities are each liable to contribute up to and not exceeding \$50.

Upon receiving written notice of the membership and payment of membership fee, the member(s) undertake to abide by the Constitution, support the Company's mission statement, policies and procedures.

### **REQUEST FOR SIGNATURES**

I/We apply for the above named child to be considered for enrolment at Cameragal Montessori School. I/We also enclose \$110 (inc GST) for the enrolment fee. This fee is non-refundable. I/We understand that this is a three-year program and that we are committed to completing the full program. I/We accept that the above named child is completely toilet trained in order to start at age 3. I/We acknowledge that Cameragal Montessori School is a parent run school and if our child is enrolled, I/We will be expected to contribute to the running of the school.

I/We hereby request membership of the Cameragal Montessori School. I/We enclose the membership fee of \$55 (inc GST). Membership is renewable annually and has to be maintained both whilst your child is on the waiting list and attending the school. This fee is non-refundable.

Note: Each parent is granted individual membership except only one membership fee is payable per family and only one parent is entitled to vote at general meetings.

The total amount to accompany your application is \$165 (inc GST).

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_